

Entwined Destinies

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Summary: Well, this is one of my one-shot works and it is based on Yu Yu Hakusho, an anime. Yaoi warning!

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A Yu Yu Hakusho fanfic by Siew Lee

Destinies, the stream of life, Destinies, the hope of dreams...

Two figures sat side by side under a huge tree in the middle of the deserted park. It was nearly midnight now, as twelve strokes of the garden clock tower signaled it. The night was heralded by the constant chirping of crickets and a lonely hoot of an owl. It was so silent, so unfathomable in the depths of the darkness. At first look, it was maybe just some lovers having a secret meeting right here, but at the second glance, it was not quite what it seemed.

Sometimes, things shouldn't be perceived lightly.

A soft and gentle voice pierced the air, shattering the tranquil silence that hung over both of them for a long time. The moonlight wasn't clear and high that night, but two shapes could roughly be seen.

"Hiei, we can't go on living like this forever," began the gentle voice.

"Why? Isn't it good this way?" answered another voice, this one

deeper than the first voice.

"Because... I found it difficult to withstand the pain that I have to endure... The pressure from my family, community, friends... Sometimes, I was a little scared that our secrets might get disclosed," explained the first voice.

"Why? You could just turn a blind eye and a deaf ear on them... if we live just like this, won't it be a lot better?" growled the deeper voice.

"No... Hiei, you don't understand..."

"Yes, I understand everything you want to say, you are just plain selfish," the other voice said hardly, slightly indicating that there was a slight tone of resentment.

"No... That was not what I meant!" exclaimed the gentle voice loudly, loud enough to scare away the birds which were resting up in the tree. In the dark skyline, dark shapes of frightened birds flew away in flocks.

"Yes, Kurama. I always knew that you wanted me for something. I want you to come with me to Makai, yet you say that you can't leave your human mother alone. What do you want then? My body?" snarled the much deeper voice.

"No, you know I won't be that! Hiei, you are just being ignorant and belligerent tonight!"

"That depends..." answered the deeper voice. Suddenly, a dark figure got up from its place under the tree and flitted off quickly, leaving the other person below the tree in the dead of the night... That night carried a very heavy scent of despair and rejection. The very scent of a tragedy.

Love, the blood of feelings, Tragedies, the death of love

Hiei sat down on a branch of a tree. It was nearly three in the morning already. Almost three hours after he had left Kurama in the silent and lonely park, now he felt a twinge of regret what he had done. Besides, Kurama just wanted to be with his family...

Family? Hiei had never once had a family to go back to. He was an outcast, a pariah, a forbidden child. That shame of being a bastard had left a scar that could never heal in his very soul, so deep that nothing could ever restore it into its original form. He was the cruel and cold-blooded killer in Makai, fear and terror were written across everyone's face whenever they were to hear his name. Hiei bit back the bitter taste in his mouth, or was it simply the unbearable pain in his heart? Hiei didn't know for sure.

He had always thought that Kurama was the one who truly discerned his inner nature, but he was wrong... He had once asked Kurama to take him to Makai, so they might live forever as a couple, without any barriers to stop them; but Kurama didn't want to accept his offer. What should he do? Nothing.

Hiei just had to hold back the sob that he was constraining painfully. Slowly, he buried his face in his hands, he had never expected Kurama to be that selfish. Kurama had actually put his mother ahead of him. Who was Shiori compared to him? Shiori was only Kurama's human mother and Hiei was Kurama's lover! Hiei blinked away hot tears that came to his eyes... The acute feeling in his chest was so bad that he had to close his eyes and hold his breath to calm down...

Loving someone was so difficult for him. It was simply too much when he had to admit his love for Kurama in the first place, but he admitted it anyway. A wry smile lit up at the corner of Hiei's mouth as he recalled the time when Kurama had tricked him into saying his feelings out loud... That was truly a priceless moment; but it was all gone now... Leaving only ashes of saturnine emotions; and at last, of anger.

What must he do in the meantime? The feeling of being rejected and abandoned was terrible, as if something had slashed him across the chest, leaving him powerless to defend himself. Hiei sighed unhappily, maybe he was unworthy of Kurama paying so much attention to him... After all, he was just only a poor and pitiful koorime child... Tears began to form at the corner of his eyelids, but Hiei squeezed them away.

I, Hiei, the Forbidden Child of Makai, shall never shed another tear for Kurama, that heartless youko...

Hiei felt even angrier as he thought that. In a sweeping motion, he flew, in search of a place to rest, to calm down. Or at least to hide from the reality...

A friend lost shall never be returned, Lost love shall never be reunited...

Kurama stared at the fleeing shadow for a long time, until Hiei disappeared from his sight. Hiei was so stubborn and defiant at times. Kurama gritted his teeth and tightened his fist, unable to believe that Hiei had actually flown off like that... Sometimes Hiei wasn't at all reasonable.

Kurama sighed, depressed, and sat down on the grass. The night was so silent and moody, almost reflecting what he was experiencing right now. Hiei still could not comprehend why he was unable to leave his family, his friends back here in Ningenkai. Kurama had a very docile nature during normal times. Perhaps being a human now had neutralized his actual youko behaviour.

Kurama almost laughed out aloud as he remembered all those glorious days he felt when he was in Makai, living as a pure youko. Youkos... He was a thief back then, slaughtering and decapitating enemies as he robbed and killed. Inari-sama... He had not seen him for a very long time...

*Hiei... Why can't you understand what a predicament I am in now? I have a life in Ningenkai as Shuichi Minamino, but I still can't let you go. I love you too fierily, too deeply to see you go just like that; but I can't leave my life hanging here just like that. No... I

can't be that selfish... Hiei, you must understand,* whispered Kurama into the night.

Kurama's thinking was confused now. He had to make a choice, either Hiei or Ningenkai... No... If he went with Hiei, what would his dearest mother do? Live alone in this world? No... She still had her husband and stepson. If he let go of Hiei now, he might never see him again. Kurama collapsed on the soft grass, fervently hoping that somehow, Inari-sama will help him out.

The moonlight was so placid... but hordes of doubts and unanswered questions lingered in the cool night air, heralding the fall of a being, the fall of his hopes and dreams.

Sacrifice for one is priceless, Remembrance of love is forever...

It was already afternoon, but Hiei was still nowhere to be seen. Kurama paced up and down across the room, occasionally looking out of the window for any signs of a black shadow. No... was the answer again.

Maybe Hiei really meant what he said. Kurama sighed again, and took out his windbreaker from the wall closet. Perhaps a walk outside these four walls might do him some good... Besides, if Hiei didn't want to come back, waiting forever for him here wouldn't do any good.

It was a fine day alright, but as Kurama walked along, he simply didn't have the heart to look around and enjoy the beautiful scenery set before him. Hiei was missing, but Kurama couldn't take any initiative to look for him. Sometimes, mortals couldn't control destiny, as it must be allowed to take its own course.

Kurama strolled along the sidewalk of the busy streets. He didn't have any idea where he was heading nor where he wanted to go. Maybe loitering? Kurama despised loafing around during his free time, but this time was an exception. He then sat down on a bench outside a row of shophouses.

Kurama looked straight up at the sky, thinking of problems that arrived in waves, yet he was powerless to stop them. Hiei was the only one he had ever truly loved in his life, whether as Youko Kurama or as Shuichi Minamino. Hiei... was so attractive to him, his small body frame was delicate, enough for Kurama to hug him whenever he wanted. Kurama smiled dreamily and closed his eyes. Perhaps Hiei was only trying to test his reaction...

The street was sparsely dotted with pedestrians, hardly taking notice of anybody else around. A few boys were playing street football by the sidewalk, screaming and yelling their lungs out. There was hardly any commotion around, as Kurama carried on his daydreaming.

But things couldn't be judged by their covers. Kurama dreamt on, reminiscing of those wonderful and happy times that he and Hiei had enjoyed... Hiei's behaviour, Hiei's reaction to a cheese cake, Hiei's first bath... It was just so perfect and heavenly. *Why? Why do you have to destroy all this? Isn't it better this way?* asked Kurama

aloud suddenly, scaring away a kitten nuzzling against his feet. Hiei was gone now. Maybe Kurama would never get to see him again, after all those hard words they exchanged yesterday night. Or else... there might be another way... Kurama shuddered suddenly as he thought of that... Since Hiei wanted him so badly, why not do something that he would be proud of? But no... Kurama hadn't forgotten why he had declined Hiei's request. He still had a life in Ningenkai...

Slowly, after what had almost seemed to be an eternity, Kurama got up from the bench. Absent-mindedly, he crossed the road, too indulged with thoughts and memories... He didn't notice a few voices shouting behind him... Then, there was a loud crash... Something big and fast slammed into his body, sending Kurama flying to some 20 meters away.

It was a long time... Kurama didn't quite feel anything... It was just a sudden pain and everything was lifeless... Everything went dark... Everything was gone...

Ashes of hope buried in the sea of rejection, Colors of love fading away in the shadow of Death...

Hiei stood alone in the huge chamber of Mukuro's palace in Makai. Yes, he had gone back to Makai, because maybe Makai was his actual home, but never Ningenkai. Mukuro's palace was always chilly and Hiei never liked sitting down on the ground. At least standing was better than to sit on the chilly marble floor.

Ningenkai, a place of dashed hopes and dreams. Even Kurama had those strong Ningen feeling binding him to his human life. Kurama was a silver youko, how could he do that? Hiei wasn't sure. No, Hiei was never sure of anything.

Although Hiei's body was there in Mukuro's palace, his mind was somewhere else, in a place where no flesh and blood could ever reach. Hiei never liked to admit anything, but perhaps this time it might serve as a guide to unravel his own doubts and mysteries. He dug deeper into his memories...

A male koorime child... The Koorime tribe had thrown him into a freezing river and left him to die... Hiei would always hate the koorimes... They had made him endure suffering and torments ever since childhood. What had he done to harm them that time? Nothing, he was just a baby! What could he done as a baby? Yet, the koorimes had the callousness to dump him, whether he survived or not. As a child, he had to fend for himself, making an invincible barrier around him, both physically or emotionally. That was why he had grown up to be a vicious and cold-blooded killer.

Killing and slaughtering, he was brought up by his own self. What to do? Nobody would be there to welcome him home, nothing to comfort his anguished soul... Life was really tough for him back then.

The Reikai Investigators... A half-smile lit up at both corners of Hiei's mouth. Yusuke Urameshi was really a perfect partner, always helping him out. That Kazuma Kuwabara wasn't bad either, except that he was a bit too sarcastic at times... Nah, he wouldn't be tricked

easily in the scissors, stone and cloth game. Hiei won't have any hard feelings towards him, although he did really felt like strangling him at times. Botan and Koenma? Well, yeah, Koenma did get on his nerves every now and then, but that blue-head girl was really irritating. Hiei snickered as he toyed with the idea of his Korkuyuha tearing her into pieces.

Yukina... She was his sister, but she didn't know that he was her brother. Perhaps it was better that way, enough room for him to do his own things in peace and without worry. Hiei trusted Kuwabara in a way, but he would never ever say that in front of him. Not even to Kurama.

Hiei's heart ached when he thought of his friend in Ningenkai. Yeah, Kurama was the perfect friend for him, although they had just broken up yesterday. Why? Why was Kurama still attached to Ningenkai? Now he had regained him youko form, he should come back to Makai at once. Besides, what was the use of staying in Ningenkai for so long? Because of his mother? Because of his friends in school? Or was it just simply that he didn't want Hiei around?

Hiei pushed that awful thought away. In fact, he ought to feel at home right now! He was Hiei, the Forbidden Child of Makai, Mukuro's elite warrior... That was something that wasn't easy to achieve. That didn't do any good, life was just so bleak without someone to lend a listening ear to him.

Unexpectedly, someone spoke aloud in the silent chamber.

"Hiei?" asked the voice.

"Mukuro, why are you here?" growled Hiei, snapping back into reality from the Lands of Dreams.

"Simply because I want to send you on a special training course," answered Mukuro.

"Special training? What special training?" asked Hiei curiously.

"It is a training to ensure that you can make full use of your youki," replied Mukuro. "Do you want to go?"

Hiei was quiet, his thinking confused. Just as he was about to say 'no', he shut his mouth again. *No, I can't give up such a good chance because of Kurama. Besides, he doesn't care about me anymore...* Hiei bit back the bitter feeling arising within him.

"Yes," answered Hiei, his heart angry at Kurama. Perhaps both of them needed more time apart.

"Alright then, so it shall be," said Mukuro as she walked away, leaving Hiei alone...

Homelands were never meant to be left, Friendship were never meant to last forever...

It was very dark and silent that Kurama himself could nearly hear the regular thumping of his heartbeat. His head ached from a dull pain, his limbs felt weak and powerless. For the first time in his life, Kurama actually tasted the very agonizing sensation of being defenseless. Maybe that was what Youko Kurama's enemies felt when they were defeated by that unscrupulous thief.

Where am I now? Kurama began to recall what had actually happened to him before he came to this strange place... A big and fast moving object... Voices shouting behind him...

"So was I involved in a road accident?" asked Kurama aloud, looking at his open palms in disbelief.

"Yes, you were," answered a smooth female voice. Kurama raised up his head and looked around, startled; but he saw no one... Who was that? The voice that answered him sounded familiar. In fact, very familiar. Was it... *No! It couldn't be!* Kurama pushed away that possibility as soon as it popped up in his head. That was practically unimaginable for her to appear now!

Once again, Kurama looked around, but calmly this time. Slowly, a figure in white materialized in front of him. At first, it was just a soft white shadow, Kurama strained his eyes to see the figure in detail. An wave of recognition overcame him... Quickly, Kurama stood up straight.

"Hello, Kurama. Long time no see..." greeted the figure, dressed in pure white robe. This time, the figure had fully appeared and obviously, it was a youko, a vixen. A long furry tail trailed the ground and soft ears protruded from its head.

"Greetings to you, Inari-sama," greeted Kurama back with a slight bow. It was very strange, since Inari had never visited him ever since he came to Ningenkai as Shuichi Minamino. What did she want this time?

The female youko acknowledged him with a nod and began speaking. "Kurama, how's life been for you all these years? You've changed a lot, haven't you?"

Kurama just kept quiet. What could he say? He just simply disappeared from Makai to live as Shuichi Minamino in Ningenkai. Not many knew that he was injured at that time...

"You look pretty well for a Ningen, don't you?" spoke Inari again.

Kurama just smiled.

"Well, this time, I want you back in Makai. Perhaps the time has come for you to leave Ningenkai anyway. Remember, I'll be waiting..." spoke the vixen again.

"Inari-sama..." called out Kurama, but he was met with no reply, as Inari was nowhere to be seen. Her words repeated eerily in his head, *Perhaps time has come for you leave Ningenkai anyway...*

Darkness reigned his thoughts once again. Slowly, Kurama realized that he must leave Ningenkai very soon, even though he didn't wish

it. One doubt still remained in his mind, as once he left Ningenkai, Hiei won't be able to find him... Maybe he won't be able to see him ever again. *Hiei... where are you?*

Intuitions are always correct, In the fact of everlasting love...

No!!! A scream pierced through the silent and still night in the depths of Makai. A figure sat up straight and beads of perspiration dripped down from its face. Ragged breathing filled the inaudible silence and panting followed with little difficulty.

Hiei reached up with the back of his hand to wipe away sweat and sighed. It was a very bad dream. A nightmare, in fact. Hiei slowly closed his eyes.

Kurama was dead... Kurama was dead! How could that happen! Hiei opened his eyes again, forcing himself to calm down. It was only a nightmare. Hiei seldom experienced nightmares, only when... Hiei shook his head. Must be that youko doing something.

Hiei slowly lay down on the bed. Mukuro's place was always that silent at night, providing him a perfect place to rest whenever he had problems he wanted to escape from...

Perhaps... he had been a little too hard on Kurama that night. Maybe he didn't mean it. Maybe he was just attached to his human mother... Hiei sighed moodily, unable to resolve the turmoil that occurred within him. Why not he, himself, go back to Ningenkai to see Kurama? Besides, he could just stay hidden, without Kurama knowing where he was... He could camouflage his youki with living things around him.

Without much thought, Hiei got up from his bed and dressed in his black clothes. With a swing of his hand, he flicked his cloak behind him. Just then, a black wind slithered into the pitch black night of Makai, heading towards Ningenkai with truly amazing speed.

*** Hiei perched lightly on the windowsill of Kurama's bedroom. Almost cautiously, he took a peep into the room. Books were arranged neatly on the desktop, the bed was well-kept and the whole room was very clean, but no Kurama. Hiei sighed and leaped on to the rooftop. He sat down on the tiles, maybe Kurama went out with his friends. *Might even be his new girlfriend...* thought Hiei bitterly.

Just then, Hiei could hear sobs coming from the ground floor... It was a female voice whom Hiei recognized as Shiori's and another male voice trying to console her. The weeping was very sorrowful, almost it was bursting with the emotion of a heartbroken human. Hiei jumped from the place he was sitting on, landing on the grass below nearly noiselessly. Hiei craned his neck to look, as he had done many times before. Spying on Kurama... Hiei shoved the thought away at once and concentrated on the scene in the living room.

The living room was dimly lit. A female figure, Shiori, sat hunched on the sofa, grasping the phone receiver. Over her, was her husband, Mr Hatanaka, trying his best to console her. Shiori wept uncontrollably, almost breaking down into a teary mess. The room was

almost stifflingly quiet, except for the sound of Shiori's weeping. Hiei had a bad intuition, something really bad had happened...

"Don't cry anymore... It is his destiny that he would have to be involved in that accident... Leave it to god..." consoled Shiori's husband. Kurama's ningen brother, little Shuichi, sat by himself in a corner of the room, his eyes red and puffy from crying.

"But Shuichi... He is my son and he is now lying in the hospital... The people there said that he is in critical condition and he might die anytime soon..." wept Shiori tearfully, her voice cracking with the sense that her dearest son, her little boy, was going before her.

"Alright, why don't we go over to the hospital to visit Shuichi? After all, he needs our support," suggested Mr Hatanaka. Shiori nodded limply and her husband helped her stand up. Not long after, there was the sound of a car being pulled out of the garage. The sound of the car's motor dying away only brought silence to the night... The night where Kurama was dying...

Hiei suddenly understood it all. It wasn't just a nightmare after all, it was a signal that Kurama was going! Hiei knew he mustn't waste time, as Kurama might go any moment, as his Ningen body couldn't withstand such force. In a way, it was fragile. Hiei seriously doubted that he would be able to see Kurama after this, as a soul wouldn't have a definite shape after it left its body. In a way, Kurama would be eternally lost to him... Just as Hiei was about to fly off, he hesitated...

What hesitation? Was there anything left to hesitate anymore? What would Kurama think of him? Most probably some poor koorime child that was starved for sympathy... starved for love... Kurama was just only being kind to him, not that type of feeling that Hiei felt towards his friend! Hiei stopped on the wet grass.

He sucked in the cool night air, debating what to do next. Reminiscing of those happy and wonderful times they had together. In fact, it were the most wonderful and happy times he ever had in his life... With a flick of his cloak, he was gone into the deep and unfathomable night.

Kurama... Wait for me...

Waiting was never an eternal cycle, Hesitating was only the key to hopeless waiting...

"Mrs Hatanaka, your son is in a very critical state now. You must prepare yourself..." A person in white gown saying almost monotonously to a sobbing woman. The woman cried even harder... Kurama slowly blinked open his eyes. White washed ceilings greeted him together with a continuous beeping sound.

What happened? thought Kurama. As he looked again, he found that many wires were attached to his body, and he felt a painful stab down

his spine whenever he moved a finger...

"Shuichi! Shuichi! You are awake!!!" exclaimed a woman who Kurama recognized as his human mother, Shiori. Teak streaks ran down her face and her eyes were red and puffy from crying. Kurama tried to reach out a hand to wipe away her tears, but that agonizing pain shot throughout his whole body. Kurama just had to bite his lower lip to restrain the groan.

"Mother, what happened?" asked Kurama weakly.

"You have been knocked down by a lorry..." said the woman tearfully, breaking down into more anguished sobs.

I've been in a road accident? was Kurama's first reaction. Almost immediately, he remembered the part where he met Inari-sama... It wasn't a dream after all! It was just simply that Inari-sama was calling him back to her...

"Okasan? Please don't cry..." pleaded Kurama. He had always hated the sight of his mother crying like that... It had shattered his heart just to hear her sob sorrowfully.

"The doctor said... you are dying..." As Shiori said that out, she wept ever harder... She simply couldn't accept the fact that her son was dying at such a young age.

Kurama closed his eyes slowly, "Okasan, don't be sad. It is my luck that I would have to be knocked down in a road accident. Perhaps, it is in my destiny. Don't grieve anymore..." Kurama halted for a moment, as he could feel tears brimming over at the corner of his eyes. He never expected that he will leave this world so fast and quick. Life was just so short and quick in Ningenkai. Inari-sama was right, he would be going soon.

"Okasan, what else did the doctor say? Tell me the truth," demanded Kurama slowly.

"The doctor told me that... you won't be able to live through tonight... All your internal organs are failing... I don't know! I don't know!" screamed Shiori, her heart breaking over her beloved son. Just then, a doctor rushed in and two nurses tore Shiori away from the bedside.

The doctor quickly did a pupil check on Kurama and sighed in relief. "Mrs Hatanaka, may I have a word with you?" Shiori nodded and turned towards the door.

"Mrs Hatanaka, your son has just woken up from a coma and I'm surprised, but... he is still in critical condition. I'm sorry to say that, but it seems that his condition had worsened. It intrigues me that although his health is slowly deteriorating, he can still talk to you like that. Mrs Hatanaka, I suggest you should have some mental preparation," explained the doctor.

"Thank you, doctor. I know what to do..." sobbed Shiori, eventually calming down.

On the other hand, Kurama was lying on the hospital bed, thinking. What should he do next? It was a regret... He didn't get to pay back

Shiori after all these years, didn't get to enjoy life to the fullest... In fact, he was even wondering... wondering what will Hiei react if he would see him in this condition.

It was already sometime midnight. There was no one in his room anymore. Just the continuous beep of the electrical heart beat machine. Shiori had already went home with her husband. That heartbroken expression on her face was so sad, almost driving Kurama to the very brink. No, he couldn't be that selfish; but Fate still controlled his life, Destiny still ruled his soul, Death still controlled his life.

There was still one wish in Kurama's heart. The wish to see Hiei for one last time... There was a crescent moon in the dark sky, but that was the last time that Kurama ever saw Ningenkai's moon through the eyes of Shuichi Minamino.

Regret is never to be revived, Once belated would in peril...

Hiei stood on the windowsill of the hospital bedroom. The room was quite dark, overshadowed by his shadow. Placid moonlight still poured through the window panes, although it was present in sparse amounts. The silver rays rested on a body lying on the bed. Wires and tubes were attached to the human while two electronic screens showed a few jagged lines. The figure's eyes were closed, almost sleeping.

Hiei jumped down from the windowsill into the room. Slowly, he walked towards the figure. "Kurama?"

The figure blinked open his eyes. "Hiei? Why are you here?"

"To see you," answered Hiei curtly and turned his head away.

"Thank god you came so soon... I was afraid that I wouldn't be able to see you for the last time."

Hiei just kept quiet. Tears began brimming on the corner of his eyelids. Kurama... his only friend... was dying there.

"Hiei, I'm dying soon. Promise me something. When I'm gone, please take good care of yourself. There is no more time..." said Kurama weakly in the dark.

Hiei nodded, hot tears already flowed down from his eyes, making a steady river down his face. Hiei brushed them away with the back of his hand. "Kurama, I promise you...", his voice cracking with emotion. His best friend was there, his life draining away bit by bit, yet he was unable to do anything. Never in his life, he had felt so powerless, so useless.

Kurama tried manage a smile, but only succeeded in coughing. Blood spurted out of his mouth and oozed down the side of his mouth. "Forgive me for all that I did last time, now we won't have the chance to meet in parks anymore." Kurama sighed softly and looked at Hiei with his brilliant green eyes.

"No... No! Kurama, you won't die! Remember all those happy times we

had together? Please... Please don't go..." pleaded Hiei, his slender fingers reaching out to grasp Kurama's hand. Kurama squeezed Hiei's hand a little.

"My time to go is here. Goodbye, Hiei..." As Kurama said that, his eyelids slid closed. Slowly, a tear rolled down from the corner of his eye, making its way down to Kurama's soft red hair. Kurama's hand released Hiei's grasp and dropped limply on the bedside.

"No... No... Kurama... No..." mumbled Hiei. Tears came as Hiei buried his head into Kurama's chest. *No... Kurama can't be dead!* screamed Hiei mentally. The whole wide world had fallen on him... His only friend, the only person that truly understood him, was gone... Gone forever.

Hiei lifted his head to look at Kurama's face. "He is so serene looking, as if he is just sleeping." Almost stiffly, he bent down and kissed Kurama softly on the cheek.

"Kurama... I... I shall love you forever..." In an almost sweeping motion, Hiei gathered up Kurama's body and held him in his arms. The next second, there was nobody else in the room, only flying curtains and the cold wind that blew into the silent room. Kurama's deathbed... The death of a legendary youko.

Eternal love would be rewarded with hope, For the ones who are sincere with emotions...

[Hiei's thoughts in the present]

A year had passed without Kurama by my side. Sometimes, I would wish that he was still with me... Time flowed without looking back at me, or was it that I didn't look back at it? I truly didn't know.

Life was so empty without him; nobody to fill out the hollow part in my soul. In a way, it was totally lonely for me in this world. I had always thought that I didn't need anybody to live near me, anybody to treat me as a friend... But I was wrong. I never like to admit mistakes... It was too late now, Kurama was already gone.

I sighed sadly. I was in Makai right now. No, I was not in Mukuro's palace anymore, ever since Kurama left me. I simply told Mukuro that I had other things to do, then I left. Mukuro was quite kind to me as she didn't stop me. I knew she had led a sad life too...

Makai... It was so cold and hot down here, uncomfortable for many; yet I found my peace of mind here. I closed my eyes slowly, as fiery gusts of wind blew across the barren lands. One year... It was already one year... How I wished I had the chance to apologize to Kurama. I remembered the bitter taste in my mouth when I swore that I wouldn't shed another tear for Kurama... I remembered how harsh I was to him... The feeling now was terrible... It had always been a total regret for me, as I didn't appreciate the chances I had to ever say sorry to him.

I buried my head in my folded arms. One year... That one lonely night, when Kurama died. I recalled the dreadful feeling I had in my chest when Kurama's life drained away. Almost sub-consciously, I

gathered up his body and flew off in the silent night.

I sat down with his body in the park where we always met. It had all happened too fast. It was only two days ago when we first quarreled here, after these two days, Kurama was already dead. Tears still flowed uncontrollably down my face, dripping onto Kurama's hospital gown and soaking it. The wind howled and the trees bent, almost in tribute to the tragedy that struck me in such a short time. Slowly, I hugged his still warm body... It was impossible...

Dawn arose, the sun bobbing up above the horizon. I knew I had to put Kurama's human body to rest. I remembered distinctly that Kurama once said that he would like to be buried on a hill overlooking vast beautiful scenery, where he could relish the soothing rays of sunset everyday...

That happened a year ago, yet I was unable to forget that anguish that I painfully constrained deep inside my chest. Yusuke and the rest also knew about Kurama's death, as I had sent them each a message. Sad, they might be, but they would never feel the emotions that were eating away parts of me all the time. They didn't understand the situation I had been through. Kurama meant everything to me, besides Yukina. The way I said goodbye to him still echoed in my ears, the look on Kurama's face when I threw the first handful of earth... It really hurt me deep inside.

Unconsciously, a tear dropped down from my eyes and landed on the dry earth. Kurama had never come back... "No! Kurama, why don't you come back? Don't you know I miss you so much?" I yelled to the plains of Makai, knowing that nobody would hear me.

But someone did.

"I came..." a voice said behind me.

No... No... That couldn't be... It can't be... I chanted mentally. Slowly, I turned back my head to see who was it...

A silver youko stood in my path. Long and flowing silver hair blew with the direction of the wind. The youko was wearing a half smile and his eyes were closed. White robes covered his body and fuzzy ears protruded from his head.

The youko slowly opened his eyes. Liquid golden eyes. "Hello, Hiei."

I was shocked. I simply couldn't believe the sight that appeared before me... Kurama was alive! More tears began to form at the corners of my eyes, my heart nearly bursting with joy! I stood there, immobilized.

At last, I managed to open my mouth, but no sound came out. Tears of happiness already flowed down. I ran towards Kurama and hugged him around the waist.

"Kurama! Where have you been? I have been waiting for you for so long!" I yelled in his embrace, my voice cracking with emotion.

"Hiei... Inari-sama called me back to Makai," explained Kurama as I could feel his arms circling me and locking me into a bearhug.

"Why didn't you come and find me earlier? Didn't you know that I miss you so dearly? Why? Why?" I screamed...

"My soul had to have a definite shape before I could come. It took me a year to recover from the separation from my human body. Now, I have my youko form back. I'm sorry..." apologized Kurama.

"No... It is not you who had to say sorry, it's me. I'm sorry... I didn't mean to hurt you that night... Kurama, you won't know what I had been through. My conscience torturing me every waking moment of my life," I cried. After saying that, I wept even harder.

"Hiei, we won't be apart ever again. I promise I'll stay by your side forever... Are we still friends?" asked Kurama. I nodded and felt Kurama hugging me even tighter than ever. This was the time when heaven and earth were joined together, the time when our love entwined ever more securely than ever.

It was truly a miracle. Somehow, the time we spent apart from each other had helped us to realize things. Realize that important we were to each other. Shuichi Minamino's death was a blessing in disguise, as I thought I would never have the chance to see him ever again. Now, Kurama was here, standing in front of me and hugging me.

In a way, destinies were important... It was destiny that had brought us together, until we had entwined destinies. We were meant to be together forever, as destiny calls it.

Hiei, I'll never leave you ever again...

Kurama, you shall always occupy a place in my heart...

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